Statement of Original Authorship

Name of Candidate: ARUDSAKTHY PONNAMPALAM

Registration No.: PGAX 00336

Name of Programme: MASTER IN EDUCATION (TESL)

Title of Project Paper: USING PERFORMANCE TO DEVELOP STUDENT RESPONSES TO LITERATURE IN AN ESL CLASS

Area of Specialisation: TESL

I confirm that the materials contained in this Project paper are my own work. Where the works of others have been drawn upon, whether published or unpublished (such as books, articles, or non-book materials in the form of video and audio recordings, electronic publications and the internet) due acknowledgements according to appropriate academic conventions have been given. I also hereby declare that the materials contained in this Project Paper have not been published before or presented for another programme or degree in any university.

Signed: [Signature] Date: 4/4/05
ABSTRACT

Performance includes the overt articulation and expression of the literary texts before an audience. In performing, students read, understand and interpret these texts and express this meaning collaboratively in a public form using features of voice, facial expressions, action, props, music, and other theatre-related resources to convey the meaning(s) of the text to the audience. Performance could facilitate students' reading, understanding and appreciation of literary texts as they make meaning of texts and are actively engaged in these processes through their assigned roles. The ideas that they draw on including previous experiences, talk with other students and teachers will also shape their meaning-making process.

The study therefore sought to explore the literature-based experiences of a class of Form Four students as they articulated their responses to texts through different forms of performance. The performance-based activities in class focused on dramatisation of a short story, a poem and a play. The out-of-class performances highlighted the dramatisation of a short story and choral speaking. The accompanying performance in-class included the reading of texts, group discussion and students' written responses. The study was driven by four research questions which focused on teacher and student perceptions of literature, how in-class performances shaped student responses to literature, how out-of-class performances shaped student responses to literature and teacher and student perceptions regarding the use of performance in developing student responses to literature.

Data collection in this qualitative case study included participant observation of activities in and out of the classroom, student and teacher
interviews, the use of student journals and an examination of the teaching-learning materials over a period of two months. Data were analysed qualitatively and emerging themes were coded and noted. The key findings revealed that through performance passive students were transformed into highly motivated and interested students. The students also displayed learner autonomy and took ownership of the texts. The whole class was fully involved in the lessons. The learners were also able to extend their oral and written responses to texts confidently. They were also motivated to explore other literary texts on their own.

The study is significant as insights from the study suggest that the main stakeholders namely curriculum designers, teacher educators and teachers could incorporate new strategies involving the use of performance in the literature class so that learners will be empowered to respond critically and creatively to literary texts.
ABSTRAK

PENGGUNAAN PERSEMBAHAN UNTUK MEMBOLEHKAN
PELAJAR PELAJAR ESL (BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA
KEDUA) MEMBERI RESPONS KEPADA
MATAPELAJARAN KESUSASTERAAN
DALAM BAHASA INGGERIS


Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meninjau respons pelajar Tingkatan Empat di sebuah sekolah menengah perempuan apabila mereka mempersembahkan respons mereka terhadap teks sastera. Persembahan dalam kelas bertumpu kepada lakonan berdasarkan cerpen, puisi, dan drama. Persembahan di-luar kelas pula berfokus kepada pementasan cerpen yang diadaptasi serta percakapan berirama (choral speaking). Kajian ini juga berfokus kepada empat soalan penyelidikan yang berkaitan dengan persepsi guru dan pelajar terhadap faedah mempelajari
kesusasteraan dalam Bahasa Inggeris, bagaimana persembahan di dalam kelas dapat membantu pelajar menyumbang respons kepada kesusasteraan, bagaimana pementasan di luar darjah membantu penuntut memberi respons kepada teks sastera dan persepsi guru dan pelajar terhadap penggunaan persembahan untuk membantu pelajar memberi respons kepada teks kesusasteraan.

USING PERFORMANCE TO DEVELOP STUDENT RESPONSES
TO LITERATURE IN AN ESL CLASS

ARUDSAKTHY PONNAMPALAM

A Project Paper Submitted to the Faculty of Education,
University of Malaya in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

Universiti of Malaya
2003
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF APPENDICES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 The Background of the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1 Literature in the Language Classroom</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2 Literature in English Elective</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.3 Literature-based Co-curricular Activities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Statement of Problem</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Research Questions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Significance of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Literature in the Curriculum</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 The Cultural Dimension</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1.2 The Language Dimension
2.1.3 The Values Dimension
2.1.4 The Aesthetic Dimension
2.1.5 The Personal Growth Dimension
2.1.6 The Lifelong Reader Dimension
2.2 Theories of Language Learning
  2.2.1 Vygotsky’s Learning Theory
  2.2.2 Krashen’s Theory of Second Language Acquisition
  2.2.3 Krashen’s Input Hypothesis
  2.2.4 Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis
2.3 The Teaching and Learning of Literature
  2.3.1 Learner-Centred Pedagogy
  2.3.2 Rosenblatt’s Reader Response Theory
2.4 Performance and Literature Teaching and Learning
  2.4.1 Performance and the Literature Classroom
  2.4.2 Using Performance To Teach Literature
    2.4.2.1 Drama
    2.4.2.2 Choral Speaking
    2.4.2.3 Group Discussion
Conclusion
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY
  3.1 The Research Design
  3.2 The Research Site
    3.2.1 The Community
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>The School</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>The Selected Class</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>The Selected Participants</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1</td>
<td>The Teacher Participant</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>The Student Participants</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3</td>
<td>Duration of the Study</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Researcher Stances and Roles</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Researcher Roles</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1</td>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Materials</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.3</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Perceptions Regarding Literature in the Classroom</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1</td>
<td>Teacher Perceptions</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2</td>
<td>Student Perceptions</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>The Teaching of Literature in the Classroom</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1</td>
<td>Teacher-Centred Pedagogy</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.2</td>
<td>Learner-Centred Pedagogy</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Developing Student Responses through In-Class Performance</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1</td>
<td>What is Performance?</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vii
4.3.2 Performance as a Teaching and Learning Strategy 60

4.3.3 Student Roles in Class Performances 61
   Script writers Performers
   Supporting Crew Audience 62

4.3.4 Developing Student Responses Through Dramatisation 63
   Performing a Play 63
   Performing a Short Story 66
   Performing a Poem 70

4.4 Developing Student Responses in Out-Of-Class Performance 73

4.4.1 Student Roles in Performances out-of-class 74
   Script Writers Actors 75
   Production Crew Audience 76
   Director-Team Leader 77

4.4.2 Developing Student Responses through Dramatisation 78
   Performing a play 78

4.4.3 Developing student’s responses through Choral Speaking 81
   Performing a choral recitation of a Poem 83

4.5 Perceptions Regarding the Use of Performance 87

4.5.1 Teacher’s Perceptions on Performance 88

4.5.2 Students Perceptions on Performance 90

Conclusion 94
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

5.1.1 Teacher and Student Perceptions of

   Literature in the Curriculum

   95

5.1.2 Student Responses to Literature through

   Performance In-Class

   96

5.1.3 Student Responses to Literature through

   Performance Out-of-Class

   96

5.1.4 Teacher and Student Perceptions

   Regarding the Use of Performance

   97

5.2 Recommendations

   97

   5.2.1 Implications of Study for Curriculum Developers

   98

   5.2.2 Implications of Study for Teacher Educators

   99

   5.2.3 Implications of Study for Literature Teachers

   100

5.3 Conclusion

   101

REFERENCES

   102

APPENDICES

   108
LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Director General’s directive to schools regarding English Language and Literature-based Co-curricular Activities

APPENDIX 2: Education Ministry’s circular regarding the prescribed texts for the fourth cycle of the Literature in English elective

APPENDIX A: Table which displays using performance as a strategy to develop Student responses in-class and out-of-class

APPENDIX B: Student Participants’ written responses to the plot, characters, symbolism in the Short story (The Lamp)

APPENDIX C: Students’ written responses to the literary elements in the poem (Children’ Song)

APPENDIX D: Students’ written responses to the literary elements in the play (Educating Rita) and their responses to dramatization of the play

APPENDIX E: Students’ written responses to the literary elements in The Man From Kabul and their written responses to the performance of the dramatization of the same short story.

APPENDIX F: Samples of the teaching and learning materials

APPENDIX G: Play text of the short story (Man From Kabul)

APPENDIX H: Script of the poem (Greed) which was used for choral recitation

APPENDIX I: Students’ written responses to choral speaking

APPENDIX J: Student’s written response to the literary elements in the poem (Greed)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saratha Sithamparam for her invaluable help in meticulously scaffolding me in this project from the proposal stage to its completion. I am indebted to her for her encouragement, patience and sound advice. Thank you Dr. Saratha for showing me the advantages of moving beyond the certainties in the classroom to a world of myriad possibilities. I would also like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Moses Samuel for being a great teacher and mentor.

To my discourse community members, Mary, Gerry, Rozanna, Ruben Rosemarie and Agnes. I wish to express my appreciation for the stimulating intellectual discourse sessions we had in the Palm Court of the Education Faculty over the duration of our Masters Programme.

My thanks, too, to my husband, Magendren for his moral support and kindness. I would like to thank my precious children, Jennani and Kuhan as well as my beloved nephews Hari Raj and Giri Raj for cheering me on when my spirits were flagging. Thanks are also due to my siblings Gugasakthy, Arudselvan and Arudkumaran for always being there for me.

Most of all I would like to express my thanks to my late parents Mr and Mrs Ponnampalam, being educators themselves for nurturing in their children a love for education. I dedicate this text to my late parents.